

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

CONSENT AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Greg Brotherton, Commissioner District No. 1

DATE: September 23, 2024

SUBJECT: Letters of Support (2) re: Mason County PUD No. 1's Grid Resiliency Projects: 1) Seal Rock OH to URD Line Conversion; and 2) Jorstad Substation

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

Mason County PUD No. 1 requested that the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners approve sending two letters of support to the Washington Grid Resiliency Program for their Seal Rock OH to URD Line Conversion and Jorstad Substation projects.

ANALYSIS:

Jorstad Substation Project: There is a 35-mile stretch of powerlines that run along Highway 101 from Hoodsport to Mount Walker in Brinnon, WA. When one section loses power, the entire stretch is disabled. Mason PUD No. 1 plans to build a middle mile substation to improve the resilience of the local power grid.

Seal Rock OH to URD Line Conversion Project: This project is important for residents in Brinnon because this area experiences frequent and long-lasting power outages due to the terrain along Highway 101 and the Olympic National Forest that winds along the shoreline of the Hood Canal. The Seal Rock area is vulnerable to natural hazards like landslides, wind and snow events, and fallen trees. This project would underground almost three miles of powerlines along Seal Rock Road and Highway 101 in Brinnon, WA.

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the two letters of support: 1) Seal Rock OH to URD Line Conversion; and 2) Jorstad Substation

REVIEWED BY:


Mark McCauley, County Administrator


Date



Board of County Commissioners
1820 Jefferson Street
PO Box 1220
Port Townsend, WA 98368

Kate Dean, District 1 Heidi Eisenhour, District 2 Greg Brotherton, District 3

September 23, 2024

Washington State Department of Commerce
Washington Grid Resilience Program
EPICGrants@commerce.wa.gov

Re: Mason County PUD No. 1's Grid Resiliency Project- Seal Rock OH to URD Line Conversion

Dear Selection Committee,

The Board of Commissioners for Jefferson County, Washington would like to express our support for Mason County PUD No. 1's appropriations request to fund their Seal Rock Grid Resiliency Project, which includes the conversion of almost three miles of power lines underground along Seal Rock Road and U.S. Highway 101 in Brinnon, Washington. Mason PUD 1 serves customers in both Mason County and our rural community of Brinnon in south Jefferson County.

This Seal Rock Grid Resiliency Project is important for residents in Brinnon because this area experiences frequent and long-lasting power outages due to the terrain of U.S. Highway 101 and the Olympic National Forest that winds along the shoreline of Hood Canal. Areas like Seal Rock are vulnerable to natural hazards like landslides, wind and snow events, and most commonly, fallen trees from the rainforest canopy. Undergrounding the power lines will alleviate this issue at Seal Rock and help make the grid more resilient against these hazards, and others like wildfire.

Every customer on the PUD 1 system will benefit from this funding by alleviating the pressure on electric rates. With only 5,600 electric meters, Mason PUD 1 experiences the same challenges larger utilities have with infrastructure but with far fewer customers to spread the costs amongst. This funding would enable the PUD to complete this critical section of line without impacting household finances of the public ratepayers they serve and help make the PUD's rural power grid more resilient to support the community in Brinnon.

We hope you will agree and select Mason PUD 1's Grid Resiliency Project for funding.

Sincerely,

Kate Dean, Dist. No. 1

Heidi Eisenhour, Dist. No. 2

Greg Brotherton, Chair, Dist. No. 3



Board of County Commissioners
1820 Jefferson Street
PO Box 1220
Port Townsend, WA 98368

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Washington State Department of Commerce
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September 23, 2024

Re: Mason County PUD No. 1's Grid Resiliency Project- Jorstad Substation

Dear Selection Committee,

The Board of Commissioners for Jefferson County, Washington would like to express our support for Mason County PUD No. 1's appropriations request to fund their Grid Resiliency Project, which includes the design and construction of a middle-mile substation at Jorstad Creek in Lilliwaup, Washington. Mason PUD 1 serves customers in both Mason County and our rural community of Brinnon in south Jefferson County.

This Grid Resiliency Project is important for south Jefferson County residents on the Hood Canal because this area experiences frequent and long-lasting power outages due to the terrain of U.S. Highway 101 and the Olympic National Forest that winds along the shoreline of Hood Canal. These areas are vulnerable to natural hazards like landslides, wind and snow events, and most commonly, fallen trees from the rainforest canopy.

Currently there is a 35-mile stretch of power lines that run along Hwy 101 from Hoodspport to Mt. Walker in Brinnon. When one section goes out of power, the entire stretch goes out. During two large storm events in 2022, these customers were out of power for over three days the first time and over two days the second time because there is no redundant power supply. With a middle mile substation, most of these customers could have been back in service in less than 24 hours.

Additionally, the PUD's Hoodspport Substation and the Jefferson County substation are old (1960's) and both must be taken completely offline for the PUD to perform their maintenance. This middle mile substation would improve the resilience of the local power grid and enable the PUD to keep most customers in power under most circumstances thanks to a redundant power feed. It also will allow the PUD to be more efficient and proactive in the necessary maintenance that these other older substations need.

Every customer on the PUD 1 system will benefit from this funding by alleviating the pressure on electric rates. With only 5,600 electric meters, Mason PUD 1 experiences the same challenges larger utilities have with infrastructure but with far fewer customers to spread the costs amongst. This funding would go a long way toward making the Jorstad Substation a near-term reality without impacting individual household budgets. We hope you will agree and select Mason PUD 1's Grid Resiliency Project for funding.

Sincerely,

Kate Dean, Dist. No. 1

Heidi Eisenhour, Dist. No. 2

Greg Brotherton, Chair, Dist. No. 3